

Robert W. Strayer  
**Ways of the World:  
A Brief Global History**  
First Edition  
**CHAPTER XV**  
Global Commerce  
1450–1750  
*Fur in Global Commerce*

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**The “World Hunt”:  
Fur in Global Commerce**

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A. Europe’s supply of fur-bearing animals was sharply diminished by 1500.

B. There was intense competition for the furs of North America .

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*North American fur trade*

1. Europeans usually traded with Indians for furs or skins, rather than hunting or trapping animals themselves
2. Beaver and other furry animals were driven to near extinction
3. By the 1760s, hunters in the southeastern British colonies took around 500,000 deer every year

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4. *Trade was profitable for the Indians*
  - a. Received many goods of real value
  - b. Huron chiefs enhanced their authority with control of European goods
  - c. Indians fell prey to European diseases
  - d. Fur trade generated much higher levels of inter-Indian warfare

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5. *Native Americans became dependent on European trade goods.*
  - a. iron tools and cooking pots
  - b. gunpowder weapons
  - c. European textiles
  - d. result, many traditional crafts were lost
  - e. many animal species were depleted through overhunting
  - f. alcohol's deeply destructive effect on Indian societies

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Fur and the Russians  
Ways of the World, First Edition  
DKA Newsell

**Russian fur trade**

- 1. Profits
- 2. Had a similar toll on native Siberians as it had on Indians
- 3. Russians didn't have competition
- 4. Private Russian hunters and trappers competed with Siberians

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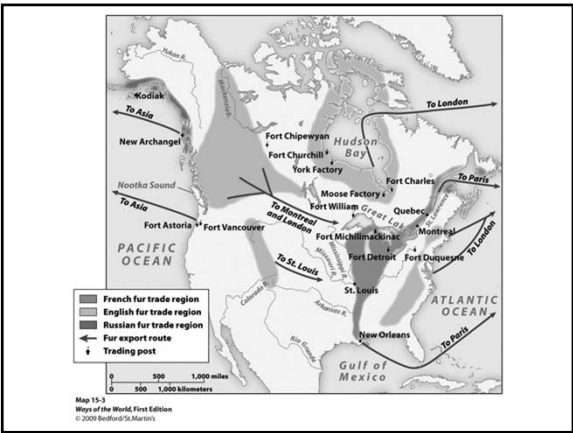
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Positive Impact	Negative Impact

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<i>Positive Impact</i>	<i>Negative Impact</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The fur trade did bring some benefits, including the trade of pelts for goods of real value.</li><li>• It enhanced influence and authority for some Native American leaders.</li><li>• It ensured the protection of Native Americans involved in the fur trade, for a time, from the kind of extermination, enslavement, or displacement that was the fate of some native peoples elsewhere in the Americas.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It exposed Native Americans to European diseases and generated warfare.</li><li>• It left Native Americans dependent on European goods without a corresponding ability to manufacture the goods themselves.</li><li>• It brought alcohol into Indian societies, often with destructive effects.</li></ul>

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